DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 351 283 SP 033 997

AUTHOR Navarro, Janet Johnson
TITLE Will Teachers Say What We Want To Hear? Dilemmas of Teacher Voice.
INSTITUTION National Center for Research on Teacher Learning, East Lansing, MI.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
REPORT NO NCRTL-RR-92-5
PUB DATE Jul 92
NOTE 25p.
AVAILABLE FROM National Center for Research on Teacher Learning, 116 Erickson Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1034 ($5.05).
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College School Cooperation; *Educational Change; High Schools; Interviews: Junior High Schools; Middle Schools; Participative Decision Making; *Teacher Influence; *Teacher Participation; *Teacher Role
IDENTIFIERS *Professionai Development Schools; Teacher Empowerment; *Teacher Researcher Relationship

ABSTRACT

At the core of the professional development school movement is the assumption that teachers' voices must be welcomed in the wider educational community through participation in mutual collaborative inquiry with university faculty. However, little thought has been given to the nature of teachers' voices, the dilemmas that arise when those voices are heard in the context of educaticnal reform, and whether, by bringing teachers' voices into the educational hierarchy, the education of children will improve. This paper argues that the welcoming of teachers' voices is more complex than simply providing occasions for teachers to speak and that, without thoughtful consideration of this issue, efforts aimed at advancing the rights of teachers to a voice in reform proceedings may be undermined. The concept of voice is expanded using three perspectives: voice as personal/private development, representative action, and collectively critical. These metaphors are used to analyze the realities and dilemmas of voice in the professiona1 development school context. It is concluded tnat active participation in collaborative work in professional development schools requires balanced use of voice from all three perspectives. Structured conversations were held with two collaborative groups, one from a high school and one from a middle school, to gather data for this study. (Author/IAH)

Research Report 92-5

Will Teachers Say What We Want to Hear? Dilemmas of Teacher Voice

Janet Johnson Navarro

National Center for Research on Teacher Learning

Sponsored by the United States Department of Education
Office of Education Research and Improvement

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Janet Johnson Navarro

Published by

The National Center for Research on Teacher Learning
116 Erickson Hall
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan 48824-1034

July 1992

This work is sponsored in part by the National Center for Research on Teacher Learning, College of Education, Michigan State University. The National Center for Research on Teacher Learning is funded primarily by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, United States Department of Education. The opinions expressed in this paper do not necessarily represent the position, policy, or endorsement of the Office or the Department.

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6/92

Abstract

At the core of the professional development school movement is the assumption that teachers' voices must be welcomed in the wider educational community through participating in mutual collaborative inquiry with university faculty. However, little thought has been given to the nature of teachers' voices, the dilemmas that arise when those voices are heard in the context of educational reform, and whether if—by bringing teachers' voices into the educational hierarchy—the education of children will improve. This paper argues that the welcoming of teachers' voices is more complex than simply providing occasions for teachers to speak and that, without thoughtful consideration of this issue, efforts aimed at advancing the rights of teachers to a voice in reform proceedings may be undermined. The concept of voice is expanded using three perspectives: voice as personal/private development, representative action, and collectively critical. These metaphors are used to analyze the realities and dilemmas of voice in the professional development school context. It is concluded that active participation in collaborative work in professional development schools requires balanced use of voice from all three perspectives. Care must be taken so that all are fostered. Minimizing one to maximize another may jeopardize teacher participation and without it enduring change in education will not occur.

WILL TEACHERS SAY WHAT WE WANT TO HEAR? DILEMMAS OF TEACHER VOICE

Janet Johnson Navarro[1]

Unlike past innovations where teachers were expected silently and blithely to carry out programs developed and mandated by the educational elite, recent educational reforms place efficacious teachers in prominent and vocal positions in classrooms and in the general educational community (Holmes Group, 1990; Lanier & Sedlak, 1989). This recognition of the importance of knowledgeable teachers as vital participants of successful educational reform has shown up in several educational perspectives.

Furthermore, in the specific context of professional development schools (PDSs) issues of teacher voice are paramount. They are at the core of what it means to have a collaboration of educators striving toward mutual goals. In previous work charting the difficulty of developing collaborative relationships, the most profound findings were related to issues of teacher voice (Johnson, 1990). For example, as relationships between individuals were negotiated—often hurriedly to meet imposed deadlines—instead of working things out together teachers were often handed agendas. Instead of discussing who should represent the staff on a school-wide committee, assignments were made. Instead of listening to teachers' needs and then working toward mutual goals, there were instances when exasperated researchers could be heard saying things such as, "This is supposed to be a collaboration, and those teachers won't do a damn thing I say."

This paper grows out of that work. And, like the reforms currently being played out in the PDSs, it is built on the assumption that welcoming the voices of teachers beyond their classroom doors is an essential step toward creating positive enduring change in education. However, while there is a growing consensus that teachers' voices *should* be heard throughout the educational enterprise, little thought has been given to the nature of those voices: whether teachers can have voices "on demand" like four-wheel drive; the nature of the dilemmas that may arise when teachers' voices are considered in the context of the realities of reform; and whether, if by bringing teachers' voices into the educational hierarchy, the education of children will improve.

Therefore, this paper urges a break from the growing thunder of rhetoric about teacher voice, at least long enough to consider alternative views on the concept of voice and

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[1]Janet Johnson Navarro is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Teacher Education at Michigan State University, earning a degree in Teacher Preparation and Staff Development. She is currently a predoctorate fellow with the Michigan Partnership for New Education and is co-coordinator of Spartan Village Professional Development School. She would like to thank Mark Conley, Deborah L. Ball, and Adolfo Navarro, all of whom listened to her emerging ideas, asked insightful and interesting questions, and provided important commentary on an earlier draft of this work.

some of the realities and dilemmas that arise when those voices enter the storm. Such consideration could serve two purposes. First, an examination of the concept of voice in the context of PDSs may provide an analytical tool to better understand the nature of collaboration. And secondly, as this paper argues, we find that supporting the rise of teachers' voices is a more complex endeavor than simply providing occasions for teachers to speak and that not doing so thoughtfully may actually undermine the reform agenda that is trying to advance the rights of teachers to join the conversation.

This argument is developed in four sections. First, research and reform literature supporting the idea of bringing teachers' voices into broader educational circles is briefly reviewed. Second, the concept of "voice" is explored using three metaphors. Third, the metaphors are used to explore realities and dilemmas of teacher voice in the collaborative context of professional development schools. Finally, implications for those who work in collaborative settings where reform initiatives are being played out are offered.

Why Should Teachers Play a Prominent Role in Educational Reform?

Historically, teachers' educational involvement has been limited to classrooms. Teachers were placed in schools where administrative supervisors, like factory foremen, strolled the corridors making sure that order was kept and the basics were memorized. With such controls, the essence of teaching as a uniquely human endeavor was removed from the work of teaching. Curriculum decisions, instructional decisions, accountability measures and disciplinary measures have all been removed from the hands of teachers (Apple, 1983; Gitlin, 1983).

However, recent educational researchers and reformers, eager to stop describing and start solving problems in education, differ from their previous counterparts. They have recognized that change won't happen by telling teachers what to do in their classrooms; rather, they see the importance of inviting teachers' voices, experience, and knowledge into problem-solving efforts. Three perspectives can be used to explain this change of mind: functional, social constructivist, and philosophical.

From a functional perspective, educational researchers and policymakers are beginning to realize there are no generic methods that teachers can be trained to follow religiously—something teachers have always known. Rather, teachers must use their professional knowledge to create and respond to particular contextualized learning situations in their classrooms. Consequently, recent reforms backed by research are putting emphasis on eclectic approaches in which teachers frame instruction, not as generic methods aimed at the ubiquitous average child but in terms of fostering all students' abilities to solve the

problems of the next century critically and creatively. For instance, in a synthesis of new approaches to instruction, Prawat (1991) discusses the "immersion approach" which requires teachers to be knowers of content and context in ways that promote deep understandings. The Holmes Group (1990) promotes "teaching for understanding," defined as" the complex, internalized, public and private scaffolding of information, insight, and experience in any field that can lift you to the next question, and get you started on it" (p. 11).

From a social constructivist perspective, researchers and policymakers recommend that teachers participate in thinking about better ways to educate children, because it is thought that positive and meaningful learning occurs, not through the mere telling of facts, figures, and objectified abstractions but through dialogue. The Holmes Group (1990), pulling principles from recent research in this area, explains that teaching for understanding "won't happen in classrooms where students sit silent and passive. Through participation in discourse, teachers help students construct more adequate meanings" (p. 11). Furthermore, "to understand a subject means in effect that you have been initiated into a community of discourse—that you take part in the conversation" (p.12). If teachers are to initiate students into communities of discourse then they must be able to create learning communities in which they, as well as their students, engage in situated, substantive, meaningful dialogue.

Central to both approaches discussed above is a wise, efficacious teacher who has strong background knowledge in subject matter and pedagogy, who can flexibly respond to the diverse needs of a multicultural student population, foster the development of multiple forms of literacy, understand that "curriculum, like language, is a moving form" (Grumet, 1988, p. 131), and flexibly and appropriately tailor instruction for specific classroom contexts (Duffy, 1990).

Finally, speaking from a philosophical perspective, Fenstermacher and Amarel (1983) argue that teachers should have the most prominent positions in educational debates because it is teachers in classrooms who "ought to be responsible for the day-to-day resolution of dilemmas implicated in educational encounters, for . . . attempts to prefabricate resolutions stand to distort, even debase, the interests of all who have a stake in education" (p. 392). Also, both Hawkins (1974) and Schwab (1976) describe humanist processes through which real learning takes place only when there is respectful communication between teachers and students as persons—not roles or ranks—involved in a common pursuit of learning meaningful knowledge.

It follows logically that if empowered teachers are at the center of the educational enterprise, then their voices should be part of educational debates on local, state, and

national levels. After all, who knows more about the responsibility of resolving day-to-day dilemmas that arise from an interactive, ambiguous pedagogy than teachers! However, it must be noted that each of these perspectives assumes a *certain kind of teacher* who says and does the sorts of things that support the perspective. Put more directly, many proponents of these perspectives, eager to "allow" teachers a voice, can only do so because their position assumes that teachers, when given the right to their voice (an interesting idea in itself—that teachers can be "given" the "right" to come out of silenced locations in the educational hierarchy) will talk when it is expected, saying what they are expected to say to support the position.

Several important questions come to mind here: Will teachers' voices be legitimate only if they support specific rhetoric? Will teachers be able to speak on demand? Will their voices be welcomed with open ears? These questions are a few of many that arise when the issue of teachers' voices is recognized. However, before moving into specific realities and dilemmas, the concept of voice should be better understood. For, while it seems to be assumed that everyone who is "educationally correct" already knows what that is, the concept is quite muddy indeed.

Some Perspectives on Voice

"Voice" has been used to describe very different phenomena. To examine further the concept of voice and how its definitions play out, three perspectives are examined here: voice as personal/private development, as representative action, and as collectively critical.

Voice as Personal/Private Development

Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986), looking across experiential, social class, career, and, age differences of women to study their ways of knowing, found that women use voice as a metaphor to "depict intellectual and ethical development; and that the development of a sense of voice, mind, and self [are] intricately intertwined" (p. 18). Furthermore, coming to know one's voice was synonymous with coming to know the power and claim the power of one's own mind. For women, acquiring voice in this sense implies a process of overcoming one's own silence. Belenky et al. describe this process as a long journey, which is, even while requiring active dialogue with other women, primarily a personal one.

Similarly, Gilligan's (1982) work on women's moral development refers to "a different voice." Voice, in this work, refers to the way people talk about their life, the language they use, and the connections they make. For Gilligan, voice is a vehicle to think about, learn

from, and describe how different individuals come to think about their moral world. In her work, the "different voice" is a twofold metaphor: The first and more transparent is that females and males have different ways of framing, solving, and describing moral dilemmas. The second, while more systemic than individual, is the idea that men's voices in the world have been used to establish the "norm" while women's voices, representing different ways of thinking about the moral world, have been seen as "abnormal." So for women, the realization that one's ways of thinking, learning, and connecting in the moral world are different rather than deviant is an empowering personal awakening.

In elaborating on the concept of voice, Patricia Hill Collins (1990) adds an important element, which is that developing a voice requires a listener. Collins points out that for African-American women this is particularly problematic because the only listener who can get "beyond the invisibility, created by [Black women's] objectification as Other, to see and hear the fully human Black woman is another Black woman" (p. 98). She explains that acquiring a voice is a part of becoming free. In finding one's voice one must become comfortable enough with language to be moved to "the action of talking with others." Collins says, "like Celie in Alice Walker's, *The Color Purple*, some women write themselves free . . . other women talk themselves free" (p. 112). In this construction, voice is a metaphor for finding existential freedom—something private and personal.

These three examples of research and theory building use voice as a metaphor to describe personal development. In the work of Belenky et al. (1986), developing voice refers to the emerging awareness of one's intellectual potency. Gilligan (1982) uses voice as a vehicle for looking at the development of moral reasoning. Finally Collins (1990), with a more poetic metaphor, refers to voice as developing, through finding others who can truly listen, a comfortableness with self—a freedom to be.

In an educational setting this voice metaphor could be used to describe the developmental process of teachers becoming empowered, autonomous, efficacious, and discovering a sense of their own agency. It represents the potential for action, the potential to participate in the transformation of self, teaching, and schooling.

Voice as Representative Action

In contrast to voice as personal/private development, voice as representative action is having a say in a public process that may or may not lead to change. For example, in democratic societies, voice is the process through which citizens can take political action by attempting to influence those who have power. Voice is used to register agreement or

opposition with current policy. "Voice," says Hirschman (1970), "is nothing but a basic portion and function of any political system" (p. 30).

Furthermore, one's right to represent oneself in the public domain is a given right belonging to anyone. Exercising voice as representative action can be the province of each individual or of representatives designated to voice ideas for others. Moreover, the exercise of voice can range from calmly written letters of complaint and well-organized petition drives to outcries, protests, strikes, or violent action.

As representational action, the exercise of voice is seen as the fulfillment of public responsibility. However, ultimately, decisions for change and actions toward change are left in the hands of the elite and powerful. In an educational setting, using voice in this way would indicate that teachers would be welcome to have dialogue, write letters, or otherwise express their views; however, the basic hierarchical bureaucratic structure of decision making would remain the unchanged. Members of the educational community not traditionally part of the bureaucratic elite would not ordinarily be included in the actual decision-making process.

Voice as Collectively Critical

As collectively critical, "voice" is the development of a critical individual voice that makes possible a collective critical voice, which makes structural transformation through political action possible. It is the exercising of the "right to participate consciously in the socio-historical transformation of . . . society" (Freire, 1983, p. 13) and the goal of personal, collective, and social change. From this perspective, the exercise of the voice is a "primordial human right" (p. 12) denied groups of people who are "alienated from the power responsible for their silence" (p. 13).

Whereas in personal/private development, gaining a voice is a vehicle for personal growth; as collectively critical, becoming literate is the vehicle for gaining a voice, which is the vehicle for transforming society. As in voice as representational action, voice is a given right to be exercised. In a collectively critical voice, social structures that systematically prohibit certain groups of people from fully participating in the system, are recognized.

To understand better this view of voice, it is helpful to look at each of the descriptors. The term *collective* is important as it indicates that, in order to work toward social transformation, a group of people must develop a shared understanding of their oppression, common goals, and ultimately a unified expression of their political position. The term *critical* describes the self-conscious process of critiquing the world, one's place in

the world, and one's right to try and change it. This critical process is necessary if individuals are to form a collective and ultimately take a political position.

In an educational setting, Gitlin (1990) makes a parallel between the social location of teachers as an oppressed group in the educational system and the social location of other oppressed groups in the larger institutions of government. For teachers, "those traditionally disenfranchised from schools" (p. 460), the process of acquiring voice is not becoming literate as Freire describes; rather, it is teachers attaining the right to use their own stories "to enter into policy debates and challenge the authority of others—such as university researchers, business people, and district and state policy makers—to tell *the* educational story" (p. 460). Fitting with the voice as collectively critical, it is thought that such participation will necessitate the transformation of both the roles that people play in schools and the school structures themselves.

However, it will be helpful to examine these abstracted perspectives of voice in a real reform context where issues from the broader reform agenda are played out in the multilayered context that envelopes each professional development school and in the local particularities of each school.

Professional Development Schools: Realities and Dilemmas of Teacher Voice

Reform and Voice in the Broader Professional Development School Context

As one part of comprehensive school reform agenda, professional development schools are charged with becoming places to develop and demonstrate innovative (a) K-12 teaching and learning for everybody's children, (b) preservice and continuing professional teacher education, and (c) school organization and management (Holmes Group, 1990). This cannot be done without the full participation of teachers. Thus in PDS settings, teachers are being counted on to become vital, active, thoughtful, and reflective knowers of subject matter and pedagogy, researchers of their own practice and of student learning, clinical teacher educators for preservice teachers, exemplary teachers of their own students, creators and managers of school PDS policy, and contributors to the restructuring of teacher education at the university. While it is not expected to happen all at once, it is expected that teachers will eventually take active vocal roles in the change process by sharing their knowledge about classroom teaching, participating in formal research projects, writing and talking about their teaching, and in general claiming a voice in the reform of their own profession.

However, to add to an already complex picture, it is important to note that this transformation of typical schools and average educators is not occurring in isolated settings.

Members from each collaborative team—and the team itself as an entity—are beholden to institutional agendas, which may help or hinder its work. The school teacher/university faculty teams referred to in this work, for example, are nested within specific school settings; which are nested within the expectations of the local school district, the community, and teachers union; which are nested within state and national agendas. Likewise, these teams are also nested within agendas of the university; which are nested within the reform hopes of the Michigan Partnership for New Education; which are nested within the broader educational reform agendas at the national level.

This multitiered context adds complexity to the concept of teacher voice and makes it even more difficult to understand the role that teacher voice plays in the daily realities of trying to create change in education through collaborative teamwork in each professional development school. For example, Where, when, and how will these voices be developed, listened to, and heard? What about the other voices in the picture? Where, when and how do they fit?

The PDS and the Local Particularities of Reform: Realities and Dilemmas of Voice

This study looks at the realities and dilemmas of teacher voice. It is an outgrowth of previous studies of how PDS faculty (teachers and professors) began collaborating on literacy issues in an urban minority middle school and a rural/suburban working-class high school. To get at the heart of what these collaborative teams thought about the challenges and benefits of their work, a "structured conversation" method was used to gather information (Johnson, 1990). Audiotapes were transcribed and analyzed. Transcripts from those initial conversations were reanalyzed for issues of voice and used for this paper.

Structured conversations. A structured conversation is an open-ended, focused conversational interview which takes place between an interviewer and a small number of participants. It has four key attributes. First, talk among participants is open-ended and focused on a set of topics or issues rather than guided by a series of written interview questions. It is free form enough so that participants may frame topics and provide examples as they see fit but focused enough to keep conversation on topic. Second, topics and issues are generated through a process in which the interviewer first observes in the context (or a similar one), reads relevant literature, reflects and holds informal interviews with participants who will be in the study or who are in similar positions as those who will. In these informal interviews topics for a structured conversation may be confirmed, revised, or perhaps dropped.

Third, a structured conversation usually takes place between a small group of participants according to their preference. If there is a one-on-one interview, it is usually to follow up on things stated previously in a small-group conversation. A follow-up conversation could be initiated by the interviewer or study participants. Fourth, during the structured conversation, participants are encouraged to interact with each other; to reflect together; to respond to each other about those reflections; to challenge each other's interpretations; and to verify understandings with examples.

For example, in this study, structured conversations were held with two collaborative groups, one from a middle school and one from a high school. Prior to these conversations, topics such as collaboration, leadership, successes, and frustrations—whether these efforts are worthwhile and why—were generated based on observations of collaborative governance structures and classroom teams in action. To confirm topic ideas, informal interviews aimed at collecting personal stories about collaborative work were held with a PDS faculty member participating in a different collaboration at the high school, an individual developing a collaborative relationship outside the realm of PDS work, and a PDS member who was part of this study.

The middle school group, consisting of two professors and two seventh-grade teachers volunteered for this study because they thought that being "interviewed by an outsider" might provide an opportunity for structured reflection on their work. They were interviewed in pairs—first the professors, then the teachers. The high school group, consisting of one university person and two high school teachers chose to be interviewed together. However, a follow-up interview was requested by one member who wished to provide further information in a private and confidential setting.

Dilemma One: Finding a Balance Between Pushing Forward and Pulling Back in the School Setting—Who Has a Voice?

Tomorrow's Teachers and *Tomorrow's Schools* (Holmes Group, 1986, 1990) outline goals for comprehensive change in K-12 and teacher education. These goals call for the restructuring of schools and universities. However, the current reality is that PDS work is primarily taking place in schools. University researchers travel to PDS sites for most purposes. This reality raises problems of voice. In the school, professors and teachers have a history of being the researcher and "the researched." These old patterns of communication haunt collaborative efforts.

And, in an interesting twist to the notion that it is teachers who must gain legitimacy for their voices, on school turf it appears that it is really professors who must earn the right to theirs. University faculty are painfully aware of having to earn their legitimacy in the

school. It was one of the most frequently mentioned topics in the structured conversations. As Monica,[2] one university researcher put it,

> I rarely say anything I don't think about. It makes me uncomfortable. My voice is calculated, whereas I don't think theirs [the teachers'] are. As much as I want to feel like I belong to the school and the university, I can't, because, if I make them angry, I could lose my invitation.

Furthermore, the teachers made it clear that Monica's uncomfortableness was warranted. Josh, a university professor, explained that teachers revealed

> a suspicion of what PDS was all about; it was just a . . . mining of dissertations out of the school. And, they said to us that, had they gotten any early hint of any of that from us, they would have closed their doors to us.

Finally, in their structured conversation, Monica, along with Dave and Jeff, two teachers, discuss the one-sided nature of the university/school collaboration and its tendency to perpetuate prior experiences which stifle progress:

Monica: It bugs me. I feel that Jeff and Dave have opened up their classrooms to us, but we haven't even opened the doors of ours to the thoughts of teachers. We can represent teachers' ideas there, but the teachers are not there . . .

Dave: And it could ruin the collaborative relationship . . .

Jeff: It becomes a one-sided kind of thing . . .

Dave: And then what will happen is it will reinforce the predispositions we already have about each other.

Jeff: We've been discussing breaking down the old paradigms and that is essentially here [at the school]. Now maybe at the university there is discussion about breaking down old paradigms—but we don't see it.

This reality raises a dilemma of voice. First of all, it is not really clear who has voice in the school setting. On one hand, it appears that university professors are silenced. They

[2]Names of MSU and school-based participants are pseudonyms.

must work to overcome the past, when university professors did mine data from schools. In addition, they fear being asked to leave. On the other hand, because PDS activity is taking place in the school, it looks conspicuously like professors are being sent from the university to change teachers, just like before.

Second, in building a collaborative relationship, professors must take the long slow steps necessary to gain their legitimacy. But there is also a need to push forward. PDS work, as one manifestation of a broader reform agenda, needs to be more than extensive, expensive staff development for a few enthusiastic and interested teachers. As Amy, a university professor put it, "You have to do more than have a love-in." But, when professors are working to gain legitimacy for their voice and doing so on teachers' turf, knowing when to pull back and when to push forward is tricky business. Amy describes it well:

> You can't go in there with an agenda that has a time line where at the end of six months you have to be here and you have to have these products, and these papers, and these presentations. . . . On the other hand you can't go out there and sort of laze around having no agenda at all. So there's this fine line between hanging out and getting to know teachers and moving at their speed and at their trust level and coming in with an agenda which says we are going to teach for understanding, we are going to change the way life is out here.

Josh, Amy's university partner, in reflecting on this dilemma asked, "How *do* you get issues out on the table? And, how *do* you act?"

This dilemma can be illuminated (or made more complex really) by looking at it from the perspective of voice as personal/private development. First, the reforms calling for efficacious, empowered teachers assume that teachers need to earn a proper voice in educational change efforts (Buchmann, 1986; Lanier & Sedlak, 1989). Second, locating PDS work in schools sends a message that professors can help teachers develop a voice—a sense of knowledge and confidence in the power of their own minds. Third, having been led to believe that working with university researchers is going to be different this time, teachers, in the spirit of collaboration, have been looking more to what they have to offer than the personal changes they might be expected to make. This leads to an awkward situation. Monica pointed out this tension:

> Norms must be established, and that worries me because this sounds like an agenda where talk between university and school faculty should look like this. I don't mean that. Somebody has to say, and then we have to agree, how voices are going to be heard. Conducting our meetings, but to introduce the

idea of norms, seems like bringing in an agenda. And to work with others to the point where they initiate norms seems like a kind of manipulation.

Indeed, this is tricky. In this example, if university professors introduce something that looks like an agenda, they risk appearing too forward and too directive. However, to guide others to the point where they initiate something they might not have otherwise could be construed as leadership, guidance, or manipulation. The work is called collaborative. But, if professors and teachers are in the school, mindful of past history, and assuming that professors can *help* teachers acquire a voice—one teachers may already have or be developing because they are vital members of a collaborative effort—then professors *must* mute themselves. Then professors don't have equal voice in the collaboration. In reflecting on past comments, one professor said, "There is the sense that this work is supposed to be consensual, but there are still things we don't talk with them [the teachers] about."

Thus, actions of team members toward each other can actually undermine the purpose of collaborating together. If university personnel push too hard, the collaborating team could be in jeopardy at the local and personal level. Yet, if they don't push hard enough, the team may also be in jeopardy of not moving forward on broader reform agendas, which is their overall purpose. While that last statement may sound like it is only professors who can move a national agenda forward, that may or not be the case. In these groups, teachers were more interested in present teaching situations, particular children, or methods, while professors were more cognizant of a larger picture.

Looking at voice as personal development helps to clarify that, in spite of the muted, perhaps convoluted efforts of professors and teachers as they begin these collaborative efforts—or because of them—teachers are developing, or activating, their own personal voices. It seems that part of what helped them in the process was that professors were willing to rest their voices, sacrificing in the beginning the broader reform agenda while working on the issues that count in the local particularities of the school and genuinely listening and learning from teachers.

Dilemma Two: Undermining the Personal and Collective Voice

The ideal PDS is a place where schools and universities merge, creating new institutions that will be places of innovation and catalysts for nationwide reform. Collaborative PDS teams are seen as the building blocks for such change. However, the reality is that collaborative teams are nested within institutions that have requirements of their own and a complex history of interacting with each other. Collaborative teams are beholden to several institutions at once. This creates a climate of contradictions in which

collaborative teams must work. While they must move at their own pace—figuring out the appropriate degree of pushing forward and pulling back—agendas, requirements, paperwork, and in general the needs of the enveloping institutions are still handed down.

Often responses from PDS teams are needed *now*! So, instead of having the opportunity to discuss who might be the best representative on a school-wide committee, assignments are made. Instead of listening to teachers' needs as a beginning point for working toward mutual goals, proposals for external funding are quickly written to meet deadlines. Then, after the fact, teachers are asked, or worse, expected to participate. Josh, a university partner, provides an example of institutional requirements of description that don't fit the team's ideas of collaboration:

> They [the university] keep asking us to name project heads. And, I've never been able to figure out among the four of us who's a project head. . . . I don't like talking without Amy when I'm at the university and we don't like talking without each other when we're at the school. So it ends up to make sense to do a lot of this together.

However, the reality causes deeper problems than a simple incongruity between what the enveloping institutions require and how collaborative groups see themselves. Institutional requirements of the school, school district, local community, teachers' union, college of education, university, state, and sponsoring organizations may undermine the quality of the personal experiences PDS faculty need to develop individual voice. Larger institutional requirements may also deny groups the opportunity to develop the sort of collectively critical voice that might allow them to take a position aimed at real educational transformation. Putting the dilemma another way: The maximization of representational voice, which is important to the success of larger reform goals, minimizes the importance of developing individual voice and collective voice; and, the maximization of personal voice or collective voice which is important to the success of individual collaborative groups that must be successful if enduring change is going to occur, minimizes the importance of representational voice.

For example, institutional structures ask participants to "voice" their interests, concerns, and ideas by representative action, while at the same time, collaborative teams are working on what it might mean to develop "voice" on a personal/private level. This contradiction played out recently when PDS participants were invited to a statewide institute to give their input regarding the future policies and actions of Michigan's PDSs. A handout, "Issues of Voice," which defined voice as a representation, framed one discussion. Questions

were aimed at getting participants' thoughts about reasonable numbers of representatives, what groups should be represented, and what representational bodies should be called at school, district, and state levels. Issues of how dissenting voices could be heard were also raised. Missing were questions regarding what voice is, how vocal participants in PDS might effect the kind of educational change that is being expected of them, how participants who feel voiceless might claim a voice, or how participants might exercise their voice through different means.

The messages sent to participants from the larger structures and the local teams contradict and potentially undermine one another. When the institutional need is for feedback, gathered as part of discussion that is set to occur in a short allotment of time as part of an insurmountable agenda, the message to PDS participants is that their voices won't be taken very seriously. At the same time, professors in individual collaborating teams are trying to build up trust for the idea that all voices are important to the success of this reform endeavor.

In this case, the sponsoring institution defined voice for all participants as representational. This definition was handed down with no discussion. Only very specific parameters were open to participants for debate. However, simply being allowed to say something, whether in agreement or in dissent, is not the same as fully participating in educational reform.

If voice can be seen from different perspectives, with different purposes, appropriate for different settings, then more than one type of "voice" can be called upon. It makes sense, for example, for organizational structures responsible to over 300 people to think about voice as representation. It makes sense at the organizational level to assume that voice is a given: that participants, when given the opportunity, will have their say and be done with it, letting those in power finalize decisions. However, if the goal is educational reform at all levels, is voice as representation enough? Thinking of voice only as a way that participants can express agreement or disagreement will eventually undermine the causes that the larger structures are trying to promote. Freire (1988) argues that individual participants need to develop a critical awareness in order to form a collective that takes a critical position aimed at structural reform. Thus, if the structures calling for educational reform expect representational participation only and plan to make decisions elsewhere (Hirschman, 1970), they may be preventing the kind of participation they actually need to accomplish the change they are hoping for.

Dilemma Three: Will Teachers Say What We Want to Hear?

As Lanier and Sedlak (1989) put it, "Teacher efficacy is the means of transforming our nation's much-criticized educational institutions into quality schools" (p. 118). The broad reform hope is that teachers will be, do, believe, know, and develop into the kinds of inquiring, learning community teachers envisioned for the success of the reforms.

However, the reality is that teachers are people with their own cultural backgrounds, values, and biases, educational histories, and agendas. When those match the values, biases, and agendas of the reforms, then there is common ground to build upon. When there is no match, the road toward common purposes is bumpy and dilemma-ridden. For example, Jeff, in explaining his reasons for involvement in PDS explained that

> it's fun, different, and interesting. But part of it is that, if teachers are going to be trained it's people like us who are going to have to do it. Monica can't do it. She can help, but university people can't do it, because if they could, they'd be doing it now. We're the ones to do it.

Jeff's statement is a mild example of how a teacher may not say things that move professors and teachers farther along the collaborative path. University people who have been in the business of educating teachers for years don't necessarily want to hear that they can't do what it is they have been doing. However, as Monica mentioned later when I asked if she saw herself in that way,

> I want to be in that role because he wants me to be. I'm learning a lot about teaching, and content. I'm learning what it's like to have five classes and one preparation period. In that sense he's helping me learn to teach. But, I know a lot about teacher education. I know a lot about how you help people learn to teach. I don't seem to be successful in getting Jeff or Dave to see that what I'm doing with teachers is teaching. It tells me that they still don't see what I'm doing. I want them to see that you can teach teachers without just telling them what to do.

Some argue that teachers are being expected to *become* things that many already are (Johnson & Roehler, 1989) and that perhaps they need to have opportunities to develop their own voice about their work. Some teachers are, for example, vital, active, thoughtful, reflective knowers of subject matter and pedagogy. Many reflect thoughtfully about their own practice on a daily basis, are exemplary teachers, and work with student teachers as clinical faculty might. However, others have been accused of basing their practice on

personal bias, caprice, and habit rather than professional knowledge (Buchmann, 1986); of being mired in the present; of being conservative and actively resisting positive change (Lortie, 1975).

Thus, when building opportunities for teachers to have voice in their own setting and in the larger context of national educational reform, unless specific teachers are chosen, it is unlikely that teachers will always say what is expected of them by reformers. What if teachers take racist or sexist positions that are grounded in personal bias? What if they have reasons for denying certain students access to knowledge?

Buchmann (1986) argues that reasons are not good enough, that educators must justify their practice based on professional knowledge of subject matter, pedagogy, and children; moral responsibility for children, their families, and the community; and by the ethical standards of the profession. Nevertheless, haunted by history and setting (as described in the first dilemma), it becomes almost impossible for professors to interject, to work explicitly toward justification, or to suggest alternatives in the PDS setting where opportunities for teachers to develop their *own* voices have been opened up. If professors or others open up the possibility for teachers to develop their own voices, they run the risk of not wanting to accept what teachers say. All participants must develop a legitimacy for their voices and the voices of others based on common goals.

It is possible to use the different perspectives on voice to shed light on this dilemma. In thinking about voice as personal development, it is important to remember that developing a voice is a long journey. It is also important to recall the role of a listener who can hear without assuming or making early stereotypical judgment, which has happened often in the past. Teachers have discussed their work and have been misinterpreted because they do not speak in the same tongues as researchers, policymakers, administrators. It is essential that professional development schools be very different places—where those who are listening are interested and more capable of hearing teachers' voices than they've been in the past. For real change to take place teachers need to feel accepted, as Emily describes:

> They [the MSU people] are really accepting of us. I've never had the sense that they thought that we were less than super people. I've never gotten the sense that they said, "Oh, God, what a rotten teacher." And we get that sometimes.

With that backdrop of trust and the idea that this is a long, long journey, changes that are the beginnings of major transformations in individuals and in schools can occur. For

example, Emily described a change in her commitments from one year to the next. In the first year of PDS work, she claims she was "in it for the kids." As she said, "I had to go along for the ride in order to give the kids the opportunity. I wanted the kids to have a real good experience." But the next year she recognized that she was in it for herself. She said, "I'm in it for me. I want to be the best teacher I can be."

This could seem like an inconsequential, selfish change. However, looking at this example through the work of Gilligan (1982), we can see that Emily's change was significant. Gilligan argues that women struggle to find a balance between caring for the needs of others and caring for their own needs. The tension is reflective of the tendency to equate the degree of women's "self-sacrifice" with their degree of "goodness." Teachers, also working with the notion of being "good" women, may easily commit to something that might benefit their students. However, to move toward the kind of voice that would contribute to a transformation of schooling, these teachers would need to shifting some of their commitment from others to self. As Gilligan states, "This is the essence of the transitional shift toward a new concept of goodness, which turns inward in acknowledging the self and in accepting responsibility for choice" (p. 85).

Will Teachers Say What We Want to Hear?

Before jumping on the bandwagon, this paper urges a closer look at the taken-for-granted concept of teacher voice. Once bashed for not following through on reform mandates fast enough, bashed again for not letting go of a reform mandate after they had become adjusted to it, and bashed again for finally closing their doors to work things out for themselves, teachers are again the hope of educational reformers. Without teachers to support comprehensive school change, reform simply won't happen.

What these interviews point out is that simply turning on the dialogic hose to let loose the flow of teachers' ideas is not a simple matter, nor necessarily the best way to changes schooling. Having a voice is more than simply opening the mouth. Having a voice involves personal and perhaps collective transformation.

By examining some of the perspectives of voice, it becomes more clear how complex the issue is. By looking at some of the realities that emerge while playing out educational reform in professional development schools, it becomes even more important to think about what it means to have voice, who can have one, how one can be acquired, what good it will do to have one (or will anyone listen anyway), and what will happen if again, teachers are not listened to.

Considerations of voice, it was said, could serve two purposes. One was to provide a tool for understanding the nature of collaborative work better. The other was to think about how providing opportunities to speak may in fact undermine the reform agenda we are trying to advance. What is learned about collaborative work is that there are many dilemmas that must be worked out. But the pushing and pulling of the dilemma may actually serve to foster the development of one kind of voice. It seems that individual voices must be developed first before any kind of collective change can occur. But, providing opportunities for people to speak out must not be thoughtless or overly scripted. All of the perspectives of voice examined in this paper need to be developed in balance. Care must be taken so that all are fostered rather than maximizing one while minimizing the others. If any of them are minimized, it will be all the more difficult for change to occur.

Many of the questions raised throughout this piece are still unanswered and are still in need of thought. Moreover, in the broader reform context, which places teachers in the center and provides the rationale for developing collaborative inquiry, if teachers are not participating fully in educational reform efforts, then enduring change in education will soon fall by the wayside.

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